

Action Plan to date, and very significantly, vitally, that the legislation incorporated the Action Plan and conditioned the FTA's entry into force on its effective implementation. I cannot in good conscience do so. Therefore, I urge my colleagues to oppose the Colombia Free Trade Agreement.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. CAMP. I yield myself the balance of my time.

I would just say, Mr. Speaker, that well before the Labor Action Plan was signed by President Obama and President Santos, Colombia had raised their labor standards and aided union members in the exercise of their rights well before the action plan ever occurred. Colombia now has implemented all eight of the ILO core conventions—six more than the United States. The statute of limitations for murder was raised in 2009 from 20 to 30 years. The minimum prison sentence was raised from 13 to 25 years and the maximum was raised from 25 to 40. The authority to declare the legality of strikes is now in the purview of the judiciary, not the executive branch, which depoliticizes these decisions and shows the transition and progress that Colombia has made in this area. Employers no longer have a unilateral right to force a strike to arbitration. The constitution reforms in 2004 shortened by 75 percent the time it takes to prosecute a homicide case. As I mentioned earlier, the murder rate in Colombia against union members has declined by 85 percent since 2002.

As my Democrat colleagues in support of the Colombian Trade Agreement have said, the Labor Action Plan is the most stringent Labor Action Plan anywhere in the world that has ever occurred.

With regard to the cooperative issue, the U.S. Trade Representative testified in the Ways and Means Committee when we worked up this legislation that that loophole has been addressed and has been closed by the Colombian government. This is something the administration has agreed has occurred as well, not just myself.

Let me just address this issue of the Labor Action Plan being placed inside the trade agreement. I would just say that to condition entry into force of the trade agreement with compliance with the Labor Action Plan is completely inappropriate, and that's why there was bipartisan opposition to doing that. I certainly welcome the gentleman's statement that I was able to get the administration to acquiesce to not having the Labor Action Plan put into the agreement. Frankly, there was bipartisan agreement, with the administration agreeing as well on that point.

Let me just say there is a labor chapter in the agreement itself that addresses the labor issues that appropriately fall within the scope of the agreement. The Labor Action Plan goes well beyond that scope. Let me say why. The purpose of the imple-

menting bill, the purpose of the bill before the House today, is to make changes to the United States laws that are necessary to implement the agreement. The Labor Action Plan doesn't require any changes to U.S. law. So therefore it should not and is not in the bill. Apart from being inappropriate, it's really unnecessary to condition entry into force on a labor action agreement that the Colombians have agreed to.

□ 1400

They have demonstrated their commitment to fulfilling the terms of the Labor Action Plan. They have satisfied, and on time, every single action item that has come due thus far. And our administration has certified that they have satisfied those conditions. There's only a few conditions that remain, which are due at the end of the year, and a few due in 2012, which we fully expect they will completely agree to.

And let me just say that it is high time we took up this agreement. Last year Colombian exporters paid virtually no tariffs when they shipped goods to the United States, but our exporters paid a tariff on an average of 11 percent trying to enter into their market. This agreement removes that imbalance by eliminating the Colombian duties. This need is urgent. Our exporters have paid nearly \$4 billion in unnecessary duties since this agreement was signed and has been pending over the years.

We know from experience these agreements will yield the benefits that we say they will. Between 2000 and 2010, total U.S. exports increased by just over 60 percent, but our exports to countries in which we have trade agreements increased by over 90 percent. Our exports to Peru, for example, have more than doubled since the passage of the U.S.-Peru trade agreement, and those are very important statistics in these tough economic times.

So this is a major economic opportunity. Delay has been costly. There are major economies whose workers and exporters compete directly with ours. They have moved aggressively to sign and implement trade agreements with Colombia, Canada, Argentina, Brazil. Those undermine our competitive edge for our Nation and our workers and our families.

So we've been falling behind. We've been losing export market share that took years to build, frankly. For example, just the U.S. share of Colombia's corn, wheat, and soybean imports fell from 71 percent in 2008 to 27 percent in 2010 after Argentina's exporters gained preferential access.

Obviously, we have seen, also, a decline in our exports of wheat since Canada signed its trade agreement with Colombia, 2 years after. They entered and enforced their agreement with Colombia, which was signed 2 years after ours. So we owe it to U.S. workers. We owe it to our exporters to approve this

agreement now and to press the President for prompt implementation.

I would urge strong support for this agreement, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 425, the previous question is ordered on the bill.

The question is on the engrossment and third reading of the bill.

The bill was ordered to be engrossed and read a third time, and was read the third time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 1(c) of rule XIX, further consideration of H.R. 3078 will be postponed.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 358, PROTECT LIFE ACT

Ms. FOXX (during consideration of H.R. 3078), from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 112-243) on the resolution (H. Res. 430) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 358) to amend the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act to modify special rules relating to coverage of abortion services under such Act, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 2273, COAL RESIDUALS REUSE AND MANAGEMENT ACT

Ms. FOXX (during consideration of H.R. 3078), from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 112-244) on the resolution (H. Res. 431) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 2273) to amend subtitle D of the Solid Waste Disposal Act to facilitate recovery and beneficial use, and provide for the proper management and disposal, of materials generated by the combustion of coal and other fossil fuels, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

UNITED STATES-PANAMA TRADE PROMOTION AGREEMENT IMPLEMENTATION ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 1(c) of rule XIX, further consideration of the bill (H.R. 3079) to implement the United States-Panama Trade Promotion Agreement will now resume.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. One hour of debate remains on the bill. The gentleman from Michigan (Mr. CAMP), the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. LEVIN), and the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. KUCINICH) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. CAMP).

Mr. CAMP. I yield 2 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Washington (Mr. HASTINGS).

(Mr. HASTINGS of Washington asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of the pending trade agreements, all three trade agreements, with Colombia, South Korea, and Panama.

In my home State of Washington, where one in three jobs is dependent on international trade, we understand the importance of expanding foreign markets for economic success. There is no question, Mr. Speaker, that these agreements will increase jobs. Let me give you an example on a parochial basis in my district. Today, potato growers and processors face an 18-percent tariff when sending their product to South Korea. This agreement will end the tariff immediately, allowing our growers to fairly compete in this very important market.

It is critical to my constituents that we act now on all three of these trade agreements. Let me be parochial again, Mr. Speaker. Apple sales in Colombia dropped 48 percent last year because Chile had duty-free access to the Colombian market while my growers in my State did not—in fact, they had a 15-percent tariff. The passage of this agreement is expected to increase apple sales by 250,000 boxes a year, allowing us to regain a market share or at least to compete on a level playing field.

As our economy is struggling to recover, I encourage all of my colleagues to act now to support all three of these trade agreements because all three of these trade agreements will expand an opportunity for our economy to grow, and especially, Mr. Speaker, the diverse agriculture economy I have in central Washington.

I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. LEVIN. I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. DOGGETT), a member of our committee.

Mr. DOGGETT. While this agreement, based upon the flawed framework of the Bush-Cheney administration, offers no model for the future with regard to workers or environmental protection, I am supporting today's measure because of a successful response to a longstanding concern that I have had, that is, Panama's status as a notorious tax haven, a place where taxpayers who refuse to pay their fair share of the cost of our national security and vital public services could go to hide their assets and dodge taxes.

About 2 years ago, Senator CARL LEVIN and I urged the administration to postpone the approval of this trade agreement until Panama first signed a Tax Information Exchange Agreement, where we could get information about assets hidden there and for Panama to change its laws regarding bank secrecy and other matters to assure that this agreement was meaningful. Panama has now met these conditions.

For the first time ever, we can obtain information from the Panamanian Government on U.S. taxpayers who have Panamanian assets or income. Though the Treasury Department

should have secured a stronger automatic information exchange similar to the one we have with Canada and 24 other countries—and I would much prefer also to see an actual record of Panamanian compliance—we need to accept this as a victory in the fight against offshore tax cheats. This would not have been possible had it not been for the strong Panamanian desire to get the trade agreement approved.

By also agreeing to 12 other exchange agreements on tax information, Panama was recently removed from the OECD gray list of tax havens. Now we must ensure that Panama's newfound openness and transparency does not end with approval of today's agreements.

I support this trade agreement, knowing that while it could have been much better, the dangers have been mitigated with an agreement that has a very modest scope.

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 1 minute.

The rights of workers, which have increasingly come under attack in this country, are also at risk under these NAFTA-style trade agreements.

In Panama a 2010 State Department Human Rights Report notes that “the government lacked sufficient mechanisms to ensure that laws prohibiting employer interference in unions and protecting workers from employer reprisals were adequately enforced.”

So the government lacked sufficient mechanisms to make sure that they were adequately enforced. We shouldn't be entering into a trade agreement with a country that has yet to demonstrate its ability to uphold international standards for labor rights and financial regulation.

Panama's track record on fulfilling its promises is clear: Just as it failed to adequately address its status as a tax haven wonderland, it has failed in its promise to adequately protect its workers.

Mr. CAMP. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to a distinguished member of the Ways and Means Committee, the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. DAVIS).

Mr. DAVIS of Kentucky. I thank both Chairman CAMP and Chairman BRADY for their leadership on the pending trade agreements with Colombia, Panama, and South Korea. All three countries have seen incredible transformation take place over the last generation, especially Panama and Colombia.

□ 1410

In the last 25 years, they have revolutionized their economies. They've revolutionized socially, and their democracies are robust.

I rise in support of the pending trade agreement with Panama and encourage my colleagues to support passage of this important agreement. It's critical, not just to our economy but also for our national security. Passage of this agreement will mark renewed U.S. engagement with the region, while coun-

tering anti-Americanism and China's increasing economic prominence in South America.

Additionally, the U.S. is the largest user of the Panama Canal and works closely with the Panamanian government to ensure the safety of the canal itself and to enhance regional, maritime, and port security. For this critical asset alone and maintaining that relationship, it would be essential to passing this agreement.

I'd like to comment on one other aspect of security that's been enhanced in all three trade agreements, and that's the security of intellectual property rights. These agreements, all three of them, Korea, Panama, and Colombia, make significant improvements to IPR protections for U.S. companies. In all categories of intellectual property rights, U.S. companies will be treated no less favorably than companies in the partner countries. That's a great step forward.

The agreements establish tough penalties for piracy and counterfeiting. They include state-of-the-art protection for U.S. trademarks. The agreements include enhanced protection for copyrighted work and, ultimately, the agreements include stronger protections for patent and trade secrets.

As we look at the changing demographics of the world and the face of relationships, it is important that we turn our eyes to the south and to the east, strengthening our ties with Latin America and with South America, strengthening our ties with Asian democracies and republics through the Korean Free Trade Agreement. What we're doing with Panama, Colombia, and Korea is critical to our future, to our children's future.

I strongly urge passage of the Panama Free Trade Agreement. It's a great step forward. It's a great step in our alliance.

Mr. LEVIN. I yield 5 minutes to a member of our committee, the distinguished gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. NEAL).

Mr. NEAL. I thank the gentleman from Michigan for the nice words of introduction.

Mr. Speaker, the U.S.-Panama Free Trade Agreement is an example of how to do a trade agreement right. This agreement will improve the U.S. trade surplus, emphasis on the word surplus, with Panama, and help with U.S. job creation and economic growth. And thanks to the FTA, Panama has brought its labor laws up to international standards and addressed Panama's status as a tax haven.

Let's start with economics. In Massachusetts, which exported a total of over \$8 billion worth of merchandise in 2010, the total number of jobs created in my district supported by exports is over 26,000.

New exports help to support new jobs, and that's why I support the Panamanian free trade agreement. Panama is one of the fastest growing economies in Latin America. This FTA will eliminate tariffs and other barriers to U.S.

exports, promote economic growth, and expand trade between our two countries.

For example, most goods from Panama currently enter the U.S. duty-free, whereas U.S. exporters face import duties in Panama ranging from 5 to over 35 percent. This FTA will level the playing field by eliminating Panama's import duties on U.S. goods. As a result, U.S. passenger vehicle exports are expected to increase by 43 percent, and machinery exports are expected to increase by 14 percent.

Furthermore, Panama is currently free to discriminate against U.S. suppliers in government procurement, including the ongoing \$5.25 billion Panama Canal expansion project. The FTA will require Panama to treat U.S. suppliers the same as Panamanian suppliers. There is going to be an explosion of opportunity with the opening of the Panama Canal after its expansion.

Now let's go to labor rights. Over the course of several years, House Democrats, myself included, have identified a variety of deficiencies in Panama's labor laws, and we insisted that the Panamanian FTA not be considered until those issues were addressed. In April of this year, Panama's President signed into law the last remaining changes needed to bring Panamanian laws into compliance with labor obligations of this agreement.

Furthermore, when we took the majority in 2007, House Democrats insisted that the FTA be negotiated or renegotiated to include the May 10 agreement. Among other things, the FTA was renegotiated to require Panama to comply with international labor standards and key international environmental agreements. Labor rights, environmental concerns, human rights. We insisted that those be undertaken, and we were told at one time that the agreement offered had to be all or nothing. House Democrats changed that with our insistence on those basic issues.

Now let me highlight how Panama has addressed its tax haven issue. And I would submit to you today there is no Member of this House that has a stronger credential on cracking down on tax havens than I do. I have stayed at it through the course of a career, and we've had some success, with more guaranteed to come.

In 2000 the OECD listed Panama as a tax haven, but since that time, Panama has worked to adopt international standards of transparency and effective exchange of information. In 2010, the U.S. and Panama entered into a tax information exchange agreement, and this past July the OECD placed Panama on its white list of countries who have substantially implemented international standards for exchange information. These are substantial advancements.

This would not have been possible without Democrats in this House who insisted that the FTA not be submitted to Congress until the tax haven issue

was addressed. This FTA is a better agreement because House Democrats insisted on those basic human rights issues.

There is no question but labor agreements, human rights agreements, and environmental agreements have been included because of work that the minority in the House has done. And at the same time, we understand that these trade agreements are not necessarily panaceas. But by and large, the ones that I know that I've supported over a career, and some I've opposed, have had a net impact on economic growth.

These are very difficult issues for Members of this body to undertake. But we argue that the genius of opportunity is what Steve Jobs promoted through much of his life, with many setbacks along the way. But understand that many of the products that Steve Jobs and his genius succeeded in implementing ensure that people across the globe use those products today, and I think this an example of those opportunities.

Mr. CAMP. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I would just say, this agreement will create new market access for U.S. exporters of consumer and industrial products. Over 87 percent of our exports to Panama will become duty-free immediately, with the remaining tariffs to be phased out that are left over a 10-year period. This will cut by more than half the average 8 percent tariff that our exporters face.

This will provide U.S. firms with an advantage over major competitors from Europe and Asia. And because Panama recently signed an agreement with the EU, our advantage is dependent on having our agreement enter into force immediately. So it's not just about what the U.S. and Panama are doing in a vacuum; it's about what the rest of the world is doing as well.

As I said, there are key export sectors that get immediate duty-free treatment: aircraft, construction equipment, fertilizers, medical and scientific equipment. This levels the playing field for our exporters versus importers from Panama, and this agreement will create new opportunities for our farmers and ranchers.

More than half of the current U.S. farm exports to Panama will become duty-free immediately. It gives our U.S. farmers an advantage over our EU and Canadian competitors. Our exports in agriculture to Panama now face a 15 percent average tariff. Our exports of pork, rice, soybeans and wheat, and most fresh fruit will receive immediate duty-free treatment, while our competitors in Asia and Europe will continue to face tariffs on those commodities as high as 90 percent. And that's why you've seen great support, both bipartisan, for this agreement. The American Farm Bureau estimates that the increase in farm exports to Panama alone could increase our agricultural exports by \$46 million a year.

Obviously, this agreement also provides our access to Panamanian services markets. It will give our U.S. service firms market access, national treatment, regulatory transparency, and that is going to be very helpful as we continue to try to grow our economy and create jobs here in the United States.

□ 1420

I would agree with my friend from Massachusetts, Panama has improved their tax transparency; and because of the cooperation, adoption of the Tax Information Exchange Agreement, as well as other numerous double taxation treaties that I won't repeat that he referenced, they have been removed by the OECD from the so-called "gray list" to join countries such as the United States that meet internationally-agreed-to tax standards.

So by almost any measure, this agreement is positive, and it is something that we should strongly support.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 4 minutes.

Public Citizen is an organization that dedicates itself to an impartial economic analysis of trade agreements. They looked at the Panama trade agreement, and here's what they came up with. They said that it includes extreme foreign investor privileges and offshoring protections and their private enforcement in international tribunals. It includes limits on financial and other service sector regulation, a ban on Buy America procurement preferences, limits on environmental safeguards and imported food and product safety and limits on drug patent rules that limit generics.

The AFL-CIO is one of the most important workers' organizations in the history of this country. They've analyzed the Panama free trade agreement, and here's what they have said. They've said it's the wrong trade model at the wrong time. Instead of helping workers here or in Panama, it rewards a country that has a history of repressing labor rights and has achieved much of its economic growth by making it easy for money launderers and tax dodgers to hide their income from legitimate authorities.

Moreover, this agreement, which was negotiated by the previous administration, contains too many flawed trade policies of the past, rather than laying out a new and progressive vision for the future. President Obama should not waste valuable time and effort advancing this inadequate agreement, but should instead focus on effective job creation measures, including currency reform, infrastructure investment, and robust training and education, and reforming our trade model so that it strengthens labor rights protections for all workers, safeguards domestic laws and regulations, and promotes the export of goods, not jobs.

The AFL-CIO noted that due to the small size of Panama's economy, the

economic impact of the Panama free trade agreement is likely to be small. Panama's gross domestic product is tiny in comparison to that of the United States, and Panama accounted for less than ½ of 1 percent of total U.S. exports in 2010. Thus, any demand for U.S. goods and services is likely to be minuscule. This is simply not an agreement that will substantially increase net exports or create American jobs.

While the Panama FTA contains—and we have to say it contains—improved labor and environmental provisions, these provisions need to be further strengthened, and our government needs to invest more resources and energy in more consistent enforcement across the board; and President Obama should work to further improve the labor, environment, investment, financial services and government procurement provisions contained in the Panama free trade agreement to build a new trade model for the future.

The AFL-CIO also pointed out another thing, Mr. Speaker. They said that Panama is not a part of any meaningful U.S. jobs plan. Even the Obama administration is not selling the Panama free trade agreement as a job-creating measure. Panama's economy is so small that the U.S. International Trade Commission was unable to quantify any job-creation effects of the Panama free trade agreement.

While economists routinely predict that trade agreements between the U.S. and developing countries will create jobs and improve our trade imbalances, the fact is that these rosy predictions repeatedly fail to pan out. The current U.S. approach to trade agreements has tended to destroy jobs, not create them.

Mr. CAMP. I yield 2 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from New Mexico (Mr. PEARCE).

Mr. PEARCE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the three free trade agreements that we are considering today. Free trade is good for America. These agreements will increase our products flowing to other countries that currently get to send their products for free here. We live in a world where products flow freely around the world. It's time for us to get American jobs to produce some of those goods moving abroad.

I would note that the President has asked us to pass pieces of his legislation, his jobs-creating legislation. I would compliment the chairman that we've waited 2½ years to get this particular proposal from the administration, and in less than 9 days, now we have it on the floor of the House. We're serious about doing the things to fix the economy. While the President lectures us, he fails to follow through on regulatory relief and tax relief. He fails to follow through on those things which would actually create jobs.

So we in the House appreciate the opportunity to vote on these particular

bills today, because it is our way of saying that we will agree with the President when he's right, and we'll steadfastly disagree with him when he's wrong. We've got many areas that we can move forward together on, and I would recommend that the President come and sit down with us, come back to this floor of the House and sit and discuss with us the way to move forward instead of pushing a plan that says "my way or the highway."

We have generally a great threat from American Government on American jobs. The overregulation is killing jobs in the electrical utility field, it's killing jobs in oil and gas, and it's killing jobs in manufacturing. We can protect workers, we can protect the environment, and we can protect species and create jobs simultaneously. It is up to us, the policymakers, to find those balance points and to move forward with commonsense legislation that will effect these.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to another member of our committee, Mr. KIND of Wisconsin.

(Mr. KIND asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. KIND. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of the Panama trade agreement, as well as the Colombia and South Korea agreements before us today. And in the matter of Panama, to Panama's credit and to Panama's Parliament's credit, they realize that in order for this trade agreement to be fully considered by the Congress, they had to make improvements in regards to the tax havens of their country. And as the chairman of the Ways and Means Committee pointed out, they did that. They took that additional step removing them from the "Gray List" of tax havens internationally.

But that brings me to the larger point. When President Obama took office, I believe he inherited three pretty good trade agreements at his desk negotiated by the previous administration; but he knew that they could be improved upon, which they immediately set out to do. And to the credit of many members of the Ways and Means Committee, especially the chairman and the ranking member both from Michigan, and the tireless efforts they put into improving these trade agreements, we finally reached the point where we could get back in the game.

At just 4 percent of the world's population, we have to be engaged with a proactive trade agenda; but the last time we had a trade agreement before this Congress has been roughly 6 years ago while other nations have been moving on with bilateral and multilateral agreements. That's too long when we have a floundering economy. Not that these trade agreements are going to be the panacea to rapid and significant job growth, but they will be helpful. In fact, countries like Panama and Colombia have virtually duty-free access to our country's markets already.

So the question is whether or not we want to try to level the playing field for our workers, for our businesses, and for the jobs being created here in the United States. And in the specific case of Panama, tariff reductions will be significant that will lead to further job growth in both the manufacturing, the service and the agricultural sectors alone.

But I commend the Obama administration and the team at the USTR led by Ambassador Kirk with the work they did in improving this Panama trade agreement, along with Colombia and South Korea, putting them in a position where there can be bipartisan support, and more importantly, to get us back into the arena of active trade which will help create jobs here at home.

□ 1430

Mr. KUCINICH. I yield 3 minutes to the distinguished gentlelady from Maine, a champion of workers' rights, Ms. PINGREE.

Ms. PINGREE of Maine. I thank my colleague and friend from Ohio for yielding me this time.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in opposition to the proposed trade agreement. The Panama free trade agreement is structured exactly like NAFTA, a trade policy that resulted in the loss of millions of manufacturing jobs all over America. In Maine alone, we have lost 31,000 manufacturing jobs since NAFTA was ratified in 1994. In addition to manufacturing jobs, it has hurt our agricultural and fishing sectors, and has had a huge impact on the economy of our State.

I have a perfect example. Steve White of Brewer, Maine, comes to mind. He worked in a factory for 22 years, making components that were used by GM, Ford, and Chrysler. Now those parts are being made in Mexico. Steve wrote this in the Bangor Daily News:

"We were given the opportunity, if we wished, to travel to Mexico and further train our replacements. My co-workers who went said that the conditions for the Mexican workers were very poor and far below the American standard. The pay rate was very low, and they would work long hours every day of the week."

Here we are today, voting on three more trade agreements that could have the same devastating consequences for American jobs. Why would we do this at a time when we desperately need these jobs right here in the United States?

This week, in addition to the three free trade agreements, we will also vote on the extension of Trade Adjustment Assistance, a program that was created for those adversely affected by trade agreements. For several years and for probably many more, we have and will spend millions of dollars retraining people who have been put out of work by misguided trade agreements.

And for what? So that big companies can get a better deal on cheap labor and loose environmental standards in other countries?

What our workers want today, what the people in my State, the State of Maine, want are jobs, not readjustment assistance, not retraining, not some idea of another job to come in the future. They want a job today. They don't want these trade agreements, and they don't want to lose any more jobs in our State.

Mr. Speaker, America has a long history of supporting our hardworking families, but this policy does not invest in our workforce. It is not what is right for America's future, and I cannot support it.

Mr. CAMP. I yield 3 minutes to the distinguished chair of the Trade Subcommittee, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BRADY).

Mr. BRADY of Texas. I thank the chairman for yielding time.

I first want to thank Chairman CAMP and Speaker BOEHNER for insisting that the White House submit the Panama trade agreement along with those of Colombia and Korea to ensure that we open all three markets equally to American farmers, manufacturers, service, and technology companies. But for your work, we would not be here today.

This agreement is long overdue. As families know, the world has changed. It's not simply enough to buy American; we have to sell American all throughout the world. Panama is a dynamic new market for America with almost 9 percent a year in economic growth—far stronger than our own. Panama is important to our manufacturers in America, it's important to our farmers, it's especially important to our service companies because so much of Panama's economy matches up beautifully with America's economy. With the expansion of the Panama Canal, you're going to see increased cargo at our ports, increased jobs along our coasts, and lower prices in products in America as well.

Critics will say, Panama is too small an economy. Why do we bother?

In this dismal economy in America, every sale, every job counts. From Europe to Canada, to Thailand, to Singapore, and many more, our competitors negotiate sales agreements with Panama because they know those customers matter.

Critics say, Panama is a tax haven. Why are we doing this agreement? But those simply aren't the facts. They also often say that labor rights aren't what they ought to be.

Panama has passed more than a dozen labor laws that dramatically commit to raising the standard of labor protections in that country. They have passed tax information agreements with America and with other countries around the world, so much so that they are now considered in standing on tax transparency equal to the United States.

This is a valued ally in a strong and growing part of the world that, frankly, has waited far too long. It is embarrassing that it has taken 4 years to bring this agreement to the floor. But today it is here. Today, we will signal we are going to open those markets, that we are going to strengthen our ties, and that we are going to pass this sales agreement with Panama.

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the gentleman from Maine (Mr. MICHAUD) be permitted to manage the remainder of the time.

The SPEAKER. Without objection, the gentleman from Maine will control the time.

There was no objection.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. Speaker, I now yield 3 minutes to another distinguished member of our committee, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PASCRELL).

Mr. PASCRELL. Mr. Speaker, Panama will be the only trade deal that I will vote for because they import very little to the United States in the first place. More importantly, this allows for, as I see it, new opportunities for the U.S. gulf and east coast ports. Over 60 percent of the goods shipped through the canal sail to or from the United States. I think they've corrected what needed to be corrected. There is no indication of a loss of American jobs, and I think that's what we should be all about.

As for Colombia, I don't know how anyone could stand in front of the American people and say that Colombia is making progress in terms of stopping the concerted, conspiratorial effort, proven time and time again, of the murder of trade unionists in that country. In fact, there have been no convictions in 94 percent of the cases from 1986 to 2010—6 percent of convictions. I don't know how anybody could stand on this floor, Mr. Speaker, and compare the system of justice there to the system of justice of the United States. Some have suggested, well, we have murders here in this country, too. Of course there are. This is an absolute disgrace. We've lost our soul on this deal, no question about it.

Also, a number of multinational companies didn't want the China currency fixed because it doesn't help their big businesses and their purposes. So let's come to the crux of the issue:

If we'd have put together all the promises that were made to the American workers for the past 25, 30 years on trade deals, we would be very, very disappointed. This deal has come a long way, perhaps, since the last administration, but neither party is privy to perfection here. This is not a one-party rap.

I've read every one of these deals as much as I could, and there are good aspects of the deal, but let's take, for instance, that the United States International Trade Commission does not believe this bill will create jobs. Let me repeat that over and over again.

The SPEAKER. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. LEVIN. I yield the gentleman an additional 30 seconds.

Mr. PASCRELL. In fact, the updated report they provided to Congress contains a very specific disclaimer that is not an official estimate.

When are we going to stop the hemorrhaging of American jobs? It is part of what we've gone through, both parties, but more importantly, the entire Nation, over the last 4 or 5 years.

Every trade deal does not mean that there are jobs created in this country. In fact, 90 percent of the trade deals have led to a lessening of jobs in the United States of America. So you can't have high hopes, and you don't have the evidence to show it. Let's bring jobs here to this country.

□ 1440

Mr. BRADY of Texas. I yield 2 minutes to the chairman of the Agriculture Committee and a champion of new markets, the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. LUCAS).

Mr. LUCAS. Mr. Speaker, I rise to voice my support for this free trade agreement with Panama.

Trade agreements open market access to our farmers and ranchers, which brings in valuable income and creates jobs. In my home State of Oklahoma, agricultural exports support more than 10,000 jobs. Across the country, agriculture exports support more than 1 million jobs total. Those jobs aren't confined to the farm either. They stretch across a variety of industries, including processing, manufacturing, and transportation.

In fact, for every dollar of farm products that we export, we add another \$1.31 to our economy from those non-farm industries. That's why it's so important to continue opening markets for American agricultural products.

More than 60 percent of our agricultural exports to Panama face some sort of duty or tariff. Those tariffs average 15 percent; but they can be as high as 70 percent on meat, 90 percent on grain, and a staggering 260 percent on poultry. Meanwhile, more than 99 percent of Panama's farm exports enter the U.S. duty free.

So this agreement will not only create new opportunities for America's farmers and ranchers but it levels the playing field for our exporters. As soon as this agreement is implemented, more than half of our farm exports will become duty free. So we can expect to see immediate opportunities once this agreement is in force.

America's farmers, ranchers, processors, manufacturers and shippers can all benefit from those opportunities. Let's help them expand their businesses and create more jobs. Let's pass this agreement.

Mr. MICHAUD. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. KAPTUR).

Ms. KAPTUR. I thank the gentleman from Maine for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to stand here today voicing the concerns of America's workers and rise in opposition to the Panama free trade agreement, as well as the South Korean and Colombian.

Like many others, in terms of Panama, I have expressed concerns about Panama's long history of being a tax haven. Supporters of this NAFTA-style trade deal claim that the Tax Information and Exchange Agreement, or TIEA, that Panama ratified in April of this year wiped away decades of secrecy as a tax haven there. We've been told that Panama's recent removal from the OECD's gray list indicates that it's a fresh start.

Well, I ask, when have the promises made in other NAFTA-style trade deals that have brought us these trade deficits since NAFTA was first signed, when have they ever made good on their agreements?

Public Citizen notes that the 2001 Panama tax agreement, called TIEA, includes a major exception, a major exception that allows Panama to reject specific requests if it's contrary to the public policy of Panama. Now, that's an interesting concept for a country that derives a significant national income from activities related to being a tax haven.

Time has proven those who oppose these NAFTA-type trade accords correct. They have all been job losers.

Otherwise, America would have a trade balance, but we have a half a trillion dollar trade deficit. Sure we might sell a few more pork chops and a few more soybeans. But, you know what, overall America loses almost all of its GDP growth simply because the growing trade deficit just squashes down the opportunity for job creation in our country. We've seen millions and millions of jobs outsourced.

Let me say a word about the U.S.-Korea trade agreement. It's modeled after NAFTA too; and, again, it's one of these copy-cat agreements. In the last decade alone, these agreements have cost Americans over 6 million jobs, 55,000 plants have been lost, so many outsourced. I mean, what world do you live in if you don't even understand what's happening with job outsourcing to our country between our borders from Atlantic to Pacific.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. EMERSON). The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. MICHAUD. I yield the gentlelady 1 additional minute.

Ms. KAPTUR. I thank the gentleman. I'm from northern Ohio. Just to clarify what this means for one of America's lodestar industries, here's a little graph that shows how many Korean cars are coming into the United States today, over half a million.

This little dot here represents what the U.S. is selling into the Korean market right now: 7,450 of our cars in that market versus over half a million of their cars sold here. This agreement basically says maybe America could

sell 75,000 cars—but there's no guarantee, no guarantee—and if you go to Korea today, you see less than 5 percent of the cars on their streets are from anywhere else in the world. So, you think they're going to be reciprocal?

Theirs is a closed market. When is America going to stand up in its trade policies to state-managed capitalism in these other countries and give our workers and our companies an even break? All this deal says is we might sell—it doesn't say must sell—it says we might sell up to 75,000 cars in that economy, but they're already eating our lunch.

The Economic Policy Institute estimates this agreement will cost us another 159,000 net jobs. And you know, Mr. Speaker, I sure hope they don't come out of Ohio again. I hope they come out of the districts of every single person here who's going to vote for this agreement and cause more job hemorrhaging to this economy.

Mr. LEVIN. I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Utah (Mr. MATHESON).

Mr. MATHESON. I thank the gentleman from Michigan for yielding me some time.

Madam Speaker, I find that sometimes when we talk about issues around here, we hear the same thing we've heard for years and years and years, and sometimes that's a good thing.

But sometimes it's also important to acknowledge that the world is changing. Things are happening. Globalization is a mixed bag, globalization creates opportunities, but it also creates a lot of challenges. As policymakers, what we need to do is look for where we can best position this country to compete in that changing environment.

I rise in support of all three of these agreements, and I will tell you what's going on compared to years ago. The rest of the world's moving on. The rest of the world is opening markets to each other, and U.S. products and U.S. opportunities are being limited by that phenomenon.

For example, in Colombia, 2008, the United States was responsible for 46 percent of all the goods coming into Colombia. But what happened after 2008? Well, Colombia entered into bilateral trade agreements with Argentina and with Brazil, and just 2 short years later, in 2010, the U.S. only had 20 percent of the products that were being shipped into Colombia. That's a pretty big drop. About 25 percent of all the materials coming into that country, the U.S. used to have that market and then we lost it.

We should seek out the fairest deals, the best deals for this country; but we should not be in denial for what's going on in the rest of the world. We should not be in denial about markets opening up elsewhere and the U.S. sitting on its hands and doing nothing.

Now, mind you, in the case of Colombia, in particular, it's already had an

opportunity for markets in the U.S. due to the Caribbean Basin Initiative. Their goods have been coming here duty free for years. We have an opportunity now to level that playing field.

So I encourage my colleagues to recognize where we are in 2011 and the circumstances we are in and what other countries in the world are doing to respond to the opportunities presented by globalization and dealing with mitigating the problems. I encourage you to vote for all three of these trade agreements.

Mr. BRADY of Texas. I yield myself 10 seconds.

I would point out in manufacturing we actually run a trade surplus with our trading partners, including NAFTA, selling much more products there. It's our trade deficit with our nontrade agreement partners that we have troubles with. Panama is a surplus for America.

I now yield 2 minutes to a key member of the Ways and Means Committee, who has helped lead the freshman class in opening new markets and finding new customers, the gentleman from New York (Mr. REED).

□ 1450

Mr. REED. Madam Speaker, I rise today in strong support of all three free trade agreements we will be voting on this evening. This is a great day. We are talking about, with the passage of these free trade agreements, approximately 250,000 new jobs across America. Those are new jobs that will put families back to work. They'll put roofs over their heads, put food on their tables, and allow them to enjoy the American Dream.

I rise in particular in regards to the U.S.-Panama agreement. Some of my colleagues, Madam Speaker, have argued that free trade has forced a lot of our manufacturing and industrial jobs to go overseas. Well, one of the facts of the circumstances can be illustrated by what's going on with U.S.-Panama. Right now our goods, as they go into Panama, face up to a 260 percent tariff at its borders. Yet the imports coming from Panama to America, because of the Caribbean Basin Initiative and the Caribbean Basin Trade Partnership Act, come to us duty free. That is an uneven playing field.

What these free trade agreements do, in my humble opinion, is even the playing field so that American workers can compete on an equal and level playing field. And if that is the case, I'm confident that the American worker and American families will always win in that competition. So I strongly support these trade agreements.

It's amazing to me that it has taken 5 years to get these agreements to this Chamber; but rather than point fingers at who caused what and what the reasons for those delays were, I always will look to the future. And what these agreements will represent is a step in the right direction of getting America back in a position where it competes in

the world market and once again rises up and says we are the strongest, we are the best, and we will create 250,000 new jobs.

Mr. LEVIN. I yield 2½ minutes to a new parent who is bringing a picture of his new son with him to the podium, Mr. POLIS of Colorado.

Mr. POLIS. I thank the gentleman from Michigan.

Today I am pleased to see that Congress is finally focused on America's top priority, jobs. As economic experts from across the ideological spectrum have made clear, these trade agreements with Panama, Colombia, and South Korea will create jobs for Americans. In fact, the White House has said these deals will create 70,000 new jobs for Americans at a time when we need them. That's why I intend to vote for all three agreements.

I'm also going to vote "yes" because these trade pacts will help put money back in the pockets of hardworking Americans. By lifting the aggressive tariffs on many commonly purchased clothing and household items, we can cut the prices of essentials that every family needs. Tariffs are essentially like a sales tax on imported goods, and like sales taxes in many States, they're regressive.

Most U.S. imports today come into this country duty free, but a small amount of items that many Americans use, like sneakers and clothing and other household items, come with a tariff that's much higher than many luxury items. For example, a pair of fancy Italian loafers has a tariff of only 8.5 percent, but a pair of affordable sneakers that moms and dads buy for their kids when they're heading back to school carry a tariff that increases their price by 50 percent. Thrifty cotton and polyester work shirts carry a 16 and 32 percent tariff, but a silk Armani shirt comes with only a 1 percent tariff. Not only are these regressive tariffs hard on the middle class, but they hurt American businesses.

Many businesses in my district can expand their operations and hire more workers with these three trade agreements. For example, in my district alone, four businesses that export electronics, building materials, and foods pay hundreds of thousands of dollars in tariffs just to the Colombian Government. That translates into jobs in my district.

Most importantly, as the gentleman from Michigan mentioned, as a new father, I think about the kind of world I want my son to grow up in. I want a world that reduces barriers between ideas, between people, and between the flow of goods and services so that we can fully embrace our brothers and sisters in Colombia, our brothers and sisters in South Korea, our brothers and sisters in Panama and, indeed, across the world to build a common greatness of humanity that manifests itself economically through the flow of goods and services, culturally, and of course to better establish the greatness of global culture.

Congress should pass these three trade agreements. I'm proud to support all three of these job-creating free trade agreements. I compliment President Obama on his leadership for bringing these deals before us, and I encourage my colleagues to vote "yes" to create jobs in America.

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Madam Speaker, I would like to inquire as to how many speakers we have remaining, if I may.

Mr. MICHAUD. I have one more, plus I will be closing.

Mr. LEVIN. I will close on our side.

Mr. BRADY of Texas. We have two more and then closing.

At this time I would like to yield 1 minute to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN), the chairman of the Energy and Water Subcommittee for Appropriations.

(Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. I thank the chairman for yielding.

Madam Speaker, I rise in strong support of the three free trade agreements with Panama, Colombia, and South Korea. Frankly, it is about time they have come to the House for action. Studies have shown that further delays on these three trade agreements would put 380,000 American jobs at risk; whereas, passing them will create over a quarter of a million new jobs and add \$13 billion to our gross domestic product.

The latest data shows 130,000 jobs in New Jersey depend on international trade. Of these, 50,000 are manufacturing jobs. Approximately one out of every six manufacturing jobs in New Jersey is directly related to global trade. We need more activity on the trade export agenda, and these free trade agreements will produce many, many hundreds of thousands of jobs. We need to get about it. Let's act on it. I strongly support it.

Mr. MICHAUD. Madam Speaker, may I inquire how much time remains on all sides?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Maine has 9½ minutes remaining, the gentleman from Michigan has 3 minutes remaining, and the gentleman from Texas has 3¾ minutes remaining.

Mr. MICHAUD. I now would like to yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. DEFAZIO).

Mr. DEFAZIO. The United States of America has failed trade policies. They are unlike any other in the world. And I guess the question before this body today should be: Will these trade policies create jobs? The answer is yes. Will they create jobs in America? The answer is no.

Like all the other free trade agreements we've entered into, these are designed to benefit multinational companies seeking cheap labor and fewer restrictions in terms of the environment and labor protections and other things overseas. That's what these are about.

They're also about transshipment of goods with the low content requirement in Korea. Yeah, goods will be cheaper. Made in China, maybe made by slave labor in North Korea, those will be really cheap.

American consumers who don't have jobs will benefit from this. No, American consumers would benefit a heck of a lot more if their neighbors had jobs, if they had jobs and if our kids had a future. Passing more of these free trade agreements, which has led to this sea of red ink, isn't going to fix the problem.

Directly before us now is Panama. Now, Panama has a very interesting economy, mostly bolstered by being a tax haven and money laundering center. Now, the agreement that we're voting on doesn't prohibit that, but there's a separate agreement entered into by the administration that will go into effect a year from now. It doesn't require an automatic exchange of tax information between the U.S. and Panama, unlike other countries where we have these sorts of agreements. We must know what we want and submit detailed information to Panama, and Panama might or might not honor that request; i.e., we submit a request for drug money laundering. They say, "You have to be more specific."

"Name the drug money people's deposits."

"Well, we can't do that."

"All right. Forget about it."

We can name them. Good. But then Panama says they won't give us the information if it is contradictory to their public policy; i.e., the way they make a living, by being the largest Western Hemisphere haven for the laundering of drug money, as a tax haven, and also terrorist money in recent cases. We're going to facilitate that with this agreement.

Somehow, a country with 3.5 million people, about the same size as my State but a much lower income per capita, has 400,000 corporations domiciled there, almost one for every Panamanian.

□ 1500

No, these aren't really domiciled there. They're very conveniently avoiding our laws and the laws of other advanced nations around the world.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. MICHAUD. I yield the gentleman an additional 30 seconds.

Mr. DEFAZIO. As I said yesterday on Colombia, the noted economist Joseph Stiglitz says that our agriculture—yes, we'll get a few agriculture jobs—will displace traditional agriculture in Colombia, causing huge disruptions in that country, driving people to produce more coca. But don't worry. Right next door, the Colombian drug lords will be able to deposit their money and not have to worry about the U.S. finding out about it—right next door in Panama. How convenient.

This is really a great series of trade agreements.

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Madam Speaker, I am proud to yield 1 minute to a freshman lawmaker who represents a region of Texas where international trade means jobs, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. CANSECO).

Mr. CANSECO. I rise in strong support of the Panama free trade agreement. Like the Colombian agreement, this agreement has been pending for far too long. And I thank the leadership of Chairmen BRADY, DREIER, and CAMP.

At a time when unemployment is hovering above 9 percent, the Panama free trade agreement will be a welcome shot in the arm to help the U.S. economy. The International Trade Commission's analysis shows that the Panama agreement will boost U.S. exports to Panama for key products between 9 percent and 145 percent. This will mean thousands of new jobs here at home. The Commerce Department has estimated that every \$1 billion in exports creates 6,000 new jobs.

This agreement will benefit all sectors of the American economy, from agricultural to financial services to manufacturing. It does so by leveling the playing field for American exporters who currently face tariffs of up to 260 percent while Panama exports face virtually no tariffs in the United States.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. BRADY of Texas. I yield the gentleman an additional 15 seconds.

Mr. CANSECO. Fundamentally, this agreement is about the economic freedom of the American people to be able to have a wide array of choices and pay less for those choices because of the power of trade and competition.

Mr. MICHAUD. Madam Speaker, is the chairman prepared to close?

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Yes, I am.

Mr. MICHAUD. I yield myself the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Maine is recognized for up to 6 minutes.

Mr. MICHAUD. On the House floor today, we are considering three trade agreements: the FTA with Korea, which manipulates its currency; the FTA with Colombia, the labor unionist murder capital of the world; and the FTA with Panama, which has one of the smallest populations in Latin America.

At a time of 9 percent unemployment, why are we even considering these trade agreements? We should not be advancing the failed NAFTA-style trade policy when millions of Americans are still out of work. Instead, we should be considering legislation that will create jobs here at home.

The American people were pretty clear in 2008 when they voted for hope and change, and they were even clearer in 2010 when they voted in a new generation of lawmakers to set Washington straight. Both times, Americans voted against the inside-the-beltway perspective and for Representatives and a President they thought would

take the country in a different direction. Both times, despite these signals from the American people, the White House and Congress have ignored them, and Washington remains as beholden to Wall Street and as detached from Main Street as ever.

In a poll done by NBC and the Wall Street Journal last year, the majority of Americans said that they thought the FTAs had been bad for the country. Given that they're so unpopular, why on Earth would the President send these agreements up to Congress right now? Well, you only have to look at the President's economic advisers to find out.

Since elected, the President has surrounded himself with advisers from Wall Street banks, with CEOs from companies that don't pay taxes, and with staffers who pushed the NAFTA-style trade agreement under Clinton. Those advisers don't bring fresh perspectives to the White House. They bring more of the same corporate priorities that have caused the current and previous White House administrations to turn a blind eye while the big banks played roulette with our pensions and mortgages and then asked for a taxpayer bailout.

The Panama free trade agreement is another example of Washington's corporate priorities. Panama's GDP is about \$25 billion. That's about the same GDP as the city of Portland, Maine. The entire country has a population of 3.4 million. We have three times as many people in the United States on unemployment lists alone. And this agreement does nothing for those 14 million Americans without jobs.

Panama simply isn't a significant market opportunity for U.S. exports, and this FTA won't do anything to reduce our 9 percent unemployment. But the big companies and the big banks want it, so President Obama is going to give in to the Washington elites once again.

The working people and the middle class don't want these trade agreements—not with Panama, not with Korea, and not with Colombia. They want good-paying jobs that allow them to provide for their families. They want a government to pass laws to help get the economy going again. They don't want another NAFTA-style trade agreement, and they definitely don't want any more Wall Street-centric, beltway-based policies from the White House or Congress. They want Washington to wake up and they want the hope and change that they voted for. How much clearer could the American people be? They want policies written by citizens, not by chief executives. They want leaders to listen to town halls, not wealthy tycoons. They want change, not more of the same.

I call on my colleagues who were sent here in 2010 with a mandate of change to work with me. Vote against these trade deals, which will cost us more than \$7 billion. I call on my colleagues

on the Democratic side to remember we have always been the party of the working people. We must vote against these NAFTA-style trade agreements. These agreements are unjust to the American people.

I urge a "no" vote on all three of these trade agreements.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. LEVIN. I yield myself the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Michigan is recognized for up to 3 minutes.

Mr. LEVIN. First, let me speak as someone who opposed, actively, the NAFTA agreement and led the effort in this House in opposition to CAFTA. This is, in terms of worker rights, the opposite of NAFTA and CAFTA. What this does is to embody the basic international worker rights enforceable in the trade agreement. Peru was the breakthrough, and Panama continues along that pioneering path.

Secondly, on Panama, why are we here? Panama acted to change its labor laws before we voted, as was true for Peru. We pointed out the deficiencies in their laws and I discussed them with the previous administration in Panama. But neither it nor the Bush administration was willing to make sure action occurred.

□ 1510

Now those changes have been made as to companies less than 2 years. Those changes have been made in terms of the economic processing zones, and they have prohibited bypassing unions by direct negotiations with non-unionized workers—unfortunately, not true in Colombia. Look, on the tax haven, they signed the TIEA. We asked them to do that, and that's precisely what they have done.

In terms of investment, this bill strengthens the present status quo in terms of investment protections for the United States communities.

So, in a word, we have a bill before us that meets the requirements that we set out when we said to the Bush administration, we will not take up Panama until changes have been made. Those changes have now indeed been made in terms of worker rights, in terms of strengthening investment, in terms of ending Panama as a tax haven. Those changes having been made, I urge support of this FTA.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Madam Speaker, to close, I am proud to yield the balance of my time to a champion for job creation in America, the majority leader of the House, Mr. CANTOR.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Virginia is recognized for up to 2½ minutes.

Mr. CANTOR. I thank the gentleman from Texas.

Madam Speaker, our current economic environment has left millions of Americans without the hope of a brighter future. The constant threat of tax increases and the continued threat

of excessive regulations coming from this administration sends the wrong signal to our entrepreneurs, our investors, and our small business people, the very people we need to create jobs. It sends the signal that America is not open for business. And there is a sense that we may be falling behind other nations in the global marketplace.

We face big challenges, but America has always stood up when times were tough. We are a country of entrepreneurs and innovators. Madam Speaker, it is time to energize our small businesses and job creators and get the economy growing again.

When House Republicans released our plan for America's job creators, we outlined our ideas to get our economy back on track, to promote an environment for job creation, and to ensure America remains the land for opportunity without raising taxes or adding to the deficit. And part of that plan was passage of the free trade agreements with Colombia—yes, Panama, and yes, South Korea.

But our support for passing these agreements is not new. On December 22, 2009, I, along with other House Republican leaders, wrote to President Obama outlining what we called the "No Cost Jobs Plan." In that letter, we noted that passage of these trade agreements would, according to experts, increase exports by 1 percent. That 1 percent increase in exports equates to a quarter of a million new jobs. We noted in our letter that the only thing standing in the way of creating those jobs was for the President to submit the trade agreements to Congress for approval. Since then, we have repeatedly called on the President to move forward with these agreements so we can clear the way for thousands of new jobs and create an environment for economic growth. Nearly 2½ years later, on October 3, the President finally submitted all three agreements.

I am glad that the administration has recognized the importance of expanding market access for American companies, both small and large. As majority leader, I introduced all three agreements the very same day the President submitted them, and I am pleased today that the House will approve all three agreements.

By moving forward on these agreements, Madam Speaker, we will help manufacturers in my home State of Virginia and those across the country increase exports and increase production. The more manufacturers produce, the more workers they need, and that means more jobs.

Our action today is proof that when we look for common ground and work together, we can produce results. I'd also like to note that today, Madam Speaker, the House is acting on another bill that is part of the President's jobs plan. The House will pass the VOW Act, the Veterans Opportunity to Work Act, to help our soldiers and veterans with the challenges of reentering the workforce.

Madam Speaker, there is no more time to waste. We have said over and over again that we should not let our differences get in the way of producing results, and we want to find common ground so that we can work together to improve the economy. I hope today's action will encourage the Senate and the President to join us in helping to pass these trade agreements and other pro-growth measures to help the American people get back to work.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. All time for debate has expired.

Pursuant to House Resolution 425, the previous question is ordered on the bill.

The question is on the engrossment and third reading of the bill.

The bill was ordered to be engrossed and read a third time, and was read the third time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the passage of the bill.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Madam Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

UNITED STATES-KOREA FREE TRADE AGREEMENT IMPLEMENTATION ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 1(c) of rule XIX, further consideration of the bill (H.R. 3080) to implement the United States-Korea Free Trade Agreement will now resume.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

Mr. CAMP. Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the distinguished member of the Ways and Means Committee, the gentleman from Louisiana, Dr. BOUSTANY.

Mr. BOUSTANY. I rise in support of all three of these very important agreements because they promote U.S. engagement in strategically important countries around the world. Also, they promote U.S. leadership. They open new markets for American farmers, ranchers, and businesses. This means American jobs, good-paying American jobs. These agreements constitute a signature jobs bill, a jobs promotion bill.

South Korea is a critical U.S. ally in Asia and one of the fastest growing economies in the world. Multiple agreements have occurred throughout Asia over the past few years while America sat on the sidelines. This agreement is the largest free trade agreement for the U.S. and could result in an increase of our exports by \$9.7 billion, according to the International Trade Commission, by lowering tariffs and other barriers to U.S. goods and services. We must pass this agreement in order to gain leverage in Asia and to show support for one of our key allies in Asia.

This expansion of U.S. engagement will serve as a platform to build further commercial relationships, creating more jobs for American workers by opening new markets. Upon implementation, more than one-third of Louisiana's exports will be duty free, and that's just a starting point. This alone will give Louisiana companies a significant advantage over similar products made in countries that don't have an FTA with South Korea.

We know small and medium-size businesses are the key to creating new jobs. Over 18,500 companies of this size, small and medium companies, export to South Korea. And they will be able to grow and hire new workers here in the United States, right here at home.

□ 1520

These agreements are about creating jobs. In fact, President Obama estimates that the passage of these bills will create over 250,000 new jobs right here at home as a starting point.

Madam Speaker, I urge voting to promote all of these agreements because it will promote American competitiveness and American jobs. It will promote American credibility with our trading allies. It will promote American confidence in our international engagement. And it will promote American leverage as we work with our trading partners. And most importantly, it will promote American leadership in the 21st century.

Mr. LEVIN. I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Washington (Mr. MCDERMOTT), ranking member on Trade.

(Mr. MCDERMOTT asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. MCDERMOTT. Madam Speaker, I rise in support of the Korean free trade agreement.

We should all be proud of Korea. We created Korea. Our troops went to Korea at the beginning of the Korean War and saved South Korea from becoming North Korea. That's how the Koreans look at it.

I took a trip with the Commerce Secretary, Gary Locke, who's now the Ambassador to China. And the Koreans said, we're very grateful and we want to have this relationship with you. And they have come—because we opened our markets to them, they are the most successful country in Asia in coming from nowhere to an average income of around \$33,000 per person.

Now, making an agreement with them is making an agreement more with an equal. And when we went from Seattle, we know about our regional relationship with them, we are the third-largest State exporter to Korea. In 2010, Washington State exported more than \$55 billion worth of goods; more than half of all that went to Asia. Hundreds of thousands of jobs in my State depend on this trade relationship. So this is not something where we're going to lose jobs.

I believe it's important to move ahead because I think it's equally important to move ahead right. And what